



Speech by

**JULIE ATTWOOD**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

---

Hansard 18 August 1999

### **OLYMPIC GAMES WORK FORCE**

**Mrs ATTWOOD** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (11.04 p.m.): Considering the still high rate of unemployment in Australia and the number of unemployed in my own electorate of Mount Ommaney, I am absolutely appalled that SOCOG is considering importing workers for the Olympics from overseas countries. People call on me regularly asking whether I can assist them to obtain suitable employment. I have a number of resumes from highly qualified people looking for work. In fact, one resident of my electorate wants to set up an over 40s group to assist that age group to find employment with local businesses.

There are many qualified and unqualified people keen to find employment. I know of many who have sent out hundreds of job applications and resumes but cannot gain employment. That is why it is simply ludicrous even to think about importing workers from overseas. Why not give the people who are out of work in Australia the first option? Our Premier, Peter Beattie, has offered to pay the fares of Queensland unemployed to travel to Sydney if they can secure employment at the Olympic Games. SOCOG has said that as at May 36,000 Olympic jobs remain unfilled and that the work force requirements included 18,000 people for catering, 2,944 cleaners, 6,000 licensed security guards, 4,500 bus drivers, 1,500 housekeepers and 3,340 broadcasting technical specialists.

I believe that the work force required will have to be reassessed closer to the event and that most recruitment exercises will have to be carved out closer to the time. The Federal Government would be wise to make use of Employment National to set up a national recruitment campaign just prior to the Olympics employment period. Employment National should be able to identify the types of skills and numbers of people available with those skills at any given moment. With this information, SOCOG would be able to identify where shortages lie and devise appropriate training programs to skill its work force in time for the Games.

Australia's unemployed would benefit greatly from the experience and perhaps even become more marketable as a result of this short-term work. This would certainly be more economical for the Australian taxpayer and would provide more valuable skills to our unemployed. We should be making the most of this tourist attracting event and put Australians first.

Time expired.

---